Wisbech Rural District Council

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1970

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

District Council Offices
Alexandra Road,
Wisbech.

M. Doreen C. Martin,
M.B.,Ch.B.,D.C.H.

WISBECH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

The Chairman (Mr. N. Payne), the Vice-Chairman (Mr. C.W. Andrews) and the Full Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY :

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (Part-time) -

M. Doreen C. Martin, M.B.,Ch.B.,D.C.H.

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR AND SURVEYOR -

Alan P. Grant, M.A.P.H.I.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR AND ASSISTANT SURVEYOR -

H. W. Evans, M.A.P.H.I.

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WISBECH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

For the year ending 31st December, 1970.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present for your consideration, the Annual Report on the Public Health of the Rural District of Wisbech for the year ending 31st December, 1970.

During 1970 the Ministry accepted Phase I of the Rural District Council's Sewerage Scheme, but this in fact is valueless as permission was not granted to go ahead with the Wisbech Borough sewage works. The Borough in conjunction with the two Rural District Councils, in the tripartite scheme, have appealed against the decision, but needless to say nothing had been decided at the end of 1970.

I would like to record my gratitude to Mr. Grant and the whole staff of the Public Health Department for their help. The interest, guidance and support of the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee have once more been a great encouragement to me.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen, Your obedient servant,

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area of District	49,841 acres.
Estimate mid-year population for 1970	13,240
Estimate mid-year population for 1969	13,290
Rateable Value at 1st April, 1970	£276,756.
Rateable Value at 1st April, 1969	£266,670
Product of a Penny Rate (at 31.3.70)	£1,103.
Number of inhabited houses	4,457.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births - 189

	M	F
Total	97	92
Legitimate	92	84
Illegitimate	5	8

Area Comparability factor: 1.01

Rate per 1,000 population (adjusted) - 14.4.
Illegitimate Live Births (per cent of total live births) - 7

Still Births - 1

	M	F
Total	1	-
Legitimate	1	-
Illegitimate	-	-

Rate per 1,000 total live and still births - 5

Total Live and Still Births - 190

Deaths (all causes - 115

	M	F
Total	65	50

Area comparability factor: 1.09

Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident mid-1970 population - 9.5

Infant Deaths (under one year) - 1

	M	F
Total	1	-
Legitimate	1	-
Illegitimate	-	-

Rate per 1,000 total live births - 5
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births - 6
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births - 0

Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births) - 5
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births) - 5
Perinatal Mortality Rate (Stillbirths and Deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and stillbirths) - 11

Maternal Mortality (including abortion) - number of deaths - Nil.

Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths - Nil.

Vital Statistics cont'd .....

Causes of Deaths of Children under 1 year -

Congenital Heart Disease 1

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) - 22

Live Birth, Still Birth, Death and Infant Mortality Rates during past six years

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Live Birth Rate						
Wisbech Rural District	16.28	18.16	17.49	17.16	14.6	14.4
Cambs. & Isle of Ely	16.3	15.7	15.7	14.9	14.5	14.5
England and Wales	18.1	17.7	17.2	16.9	16.3	16
Still Birth Rate						
Wisbech Rural District	9.52	20.83	4	9	5	5
Cambs. & Isle of Ely	10.7	15.3	14	13	9	11
England and Wales	15.8	15.4	14.8	14	13	13
Death Rate						
Wisbech Rural District	8.88	9.67	10.15	12.1	11.8	9.5
Cambs. & Isle of Ely	9.8	10.4	10.2	11	11	10.5
England and Wales	11.5	11.7	11.2	11.9	11.9	11.7
Infant Mortality Rate						
Wisbech Rural District	14.42	12.77	9	22	26	5
Cambs. & Isle of Ely	15.6	14.9	14	14	16	16
England and Wales	19	18.9	18.3	18	18	18

GENERAL MEDICAL SERVICES.

Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Executive Council - Vinery Road, Cambridge.

Clerk F. G. Lloyd, Esq.

East Anglian Regional Hospital Board - Union Lane, Chesterton, Cambridge.

Senior Administrative Medical Officer - Dr. G.D. Duncan.

(a) GENERAL -

(1) North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech.
(2) Clarkson Hospital, Wisbech.
(3) Memorial Hospital, Peterborough.
(4) Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge.
(5) Doddington Hospital, Doddington.

(b) MATERNITY -

Bowthorpe Maternity Home, Wisbech.

All primiparous mothers may be confined in the obstetric unit and other mothers may be admitted for obstetric abnormality. Since the General Practitioner Unit was opened the number of home confinements has fallen markedly as every mother may now be confined in hospital.

(c) INFECTIOUS DISEASES -

Isolation Hospital, Peterborough.
Hardwick Isolation Hospital, King's Lynn.

(d) TUBERCULOSIS -

The area chest physician holds a weekly clinic at North Cambridgeshire Hospital, Wisbech.

In-patient accommodation is provided through the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board.

(e) MENTAL ILLNESS -

Accommodation is provided (through the East Anglian Regional Hospital Board) usually in Fulbourne Hospital. This is arranged directly by the local General Practitioners. The area Psychiatrist holds a weekly clinic at North Cambridgeshire Hospital.

(f) VENEREAL DISEASE -

(1) Addenbrookes Hospital, Cambridge.
(2) Peterborough Memorial Hospital, Peterborough.
(3) West Norfolk and King's Lynn Hospital.

(g) MEDICAL EQUIPMENT SERVICE -

Medical equipment is provided on loan by the St. Johns Ambulance Division and the Red Cross Medical Loan Depot by arrangement with the County Council.

COUNTY MEDICAL SERVICES.

(A) Midwifery, General Sick and Public Health Nursing.

The domiciliary nursing staff is employed by the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council. There are 7 district nurses, 1 midwife, 1 district nurse midwife and 3 health visitors who use a part of their time in the Rural District. The midwife is qualified to administer gas/air analgesia, pethedine and trilene and the necessary machines approved by the Central Midwives Board are available for her use.

There has been a gradual change in the policy of administering the County Nursing Services. The district nurses and health visitors are attached to general medical practices in order to facilitate the professional relationship of nurses and doctors for the benefit of the population.

(B) Ambulance and Hospital Car Service.

The radio-controlled ambulance system is now working well. There is one ambulance control centre at March which directs ambulances and hospital cars with speed and economy to the points where they are required. As part of the overall scheme, 3 ambulances are stationed at Wisbech and there are 7 other ambulances throughout the Northern Area of the County.

(C) Infant Welfare Centres.

Christchurch (Parish Hall)	4th Monday.
Parson Drove (Church Hall)	1st Wednesday.
Leverington (Church Hall)	2nd Tuesday.
Fridaybridge (Church Hall).....	4th Wednesday.
Wisbech St.Mary (Women's Institute)	2nd Thursday.
Newton (Church Hall)	1st Thursday.

(D) School Dental Clinic.

County Clinic, The Horsefair, Wisbech.

(E) Home Help Service.

Available for confinements, cases of illness and for social reasons in the aged.

LABORATORY SERVICES.

Public Health Laboratory Service,
Peterborough District Hospital,
Midland Road,
PETERBOROUGH.

(Director: Dr. J. Glencross).

Public Health Laboratory Service,
Tennis Court Road,
CAMBRIDGE.

(Director: Dr. Fry).

Public Analyst,
The Laboratory,
Tenison Road,
CAMBRIDGE.

(S. Greenburgh, P.H.D., B.Sc., F.R.I.C.).

OTHER SERVICES.

Health Education -

All primiparous women are given the opportunity of attending relaxation and Mother and Baby Care Classes during their pregnancy. Recognised Women's Meetings e.g. Church groups and Women's Rural Institute Meetings, occasionally ask for a speaker on Health Education, and such requests are readily complied with by the Public Health Department.

Disinfection and Disinfestation -

Premises - By the Senior Public Health Inspector's Staff.

Bedding and Clothing - Which cannot be dealt with by this department are sent to Clarkson Hospital, Wisbech.

Meals on Wheels -

For some years now, the Women's Voluntary Service has provided 'Meals on Wheels' service for the aged on two days each week in five villages - Upwell, Outwell, Leverington, Gorefield and Newton. This plays an important part in helping to prevent deterioration of health in the very old who live by themselves. The food is cooked at the School Canteens and a very small charge is made to the recipients.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES - 1970.

	Notifications.
Dysentary	0
Typhoid Fever	0
Paratyphoid Fever	0
Meningococcal Infections	0
Scarlet Fever	6
Whooping Cough	1
Diphtheria	0
Erysipelas	0
Smallpox	0
Measles	24
Pneumonia	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	0
Food Poisoning	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	0
Tuberculosis (All forms)	0
Malaria	0
Infective Jaundice	0

CAUSES OF DEATH YEAR 1970.

	M	F	TOTAL
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	2	0	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	2	1	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	5	0	5
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast.....	0	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	2	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	1	0	1
Other Malignant Neoplasms, etc.....	4	4	8
Anaemias	0	1	1
Diabetes Mellitus	0	1	1
Other Diseases of Nervous System, etc.....	0	1	1
Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	1	1	2
Hypertensive Disease	1	0	1
Ischaemic Heart Disease	22	12	34
Other Forms of Heart Disease	4	5	9
Cerebrovascular Disease	4	12	16
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	1	1	2
Influenza	2	0	2
Pneumonia	2	4	6
Bronchitis and Emphysema	5	1	6
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	0	1
Other Diseases of Digestive System	1	1	2
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	0	1
Other Diseases of Genito-Urinary System ...	1	0	1
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	0	2
All Other Accidents	3	1	4
Suicide and Self-Inflicted Injuries	0	1	1
Totals all Causes	65	50	115

61 People died at home.

54 People died elsewhere.

Deaths from selected causes during the years 1965 - 1970.

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Lung Cancer	4	4	5	5	7	5(2)
Motor Vehicle Accidents	0	1	3	0	4	2
All Other Accidents	2	4	2	0	2	4(3)
Suicide	1	0	0	3	2	1(1)
Totals	7	9	10	8	15	12(6)

Numbers in brackets are under 65 years old.

I draw your attention to these causes of death as being essentially preventable. The number of deaths from lung cancer of course, gives no indication of the number of cases diagnosed and successfully treated.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

HOUSING.

I am indebted to the Senior Public Health Inspector for the following report.

Number of Dwellings completed during 1970 -

Council - 14 Private - 46

Number of Dwellings under construction at the end of 1970 -

Council - 18 Private - 25.

UNFIT HOUSES -

The following number of unfit houses were dealt with during the year as follows :

	Demolition Orders	Closing Orders.	Demolished in Anticipation.
Elm	3	4	2
Leverington	3	3	1
Newton	-	-	-
Outwell	-	-	-
Parson Drove	-	1	1
Tydd St. Giles	1	-	-
Upwell	-	3	-
Wisbech St. Mary	1	-	1
	8	11	5

It must be appreciated that the figures of dwellings previously given as to the number of unfit houses has been largely based upon a survey made some considerable time ago. It would be true to say that the back of the real slum property problem has been broken and we are now left with problem houses which are substandard and which often are not capable of being improved. Many of the occupiers are elderly owner/occupiers and are very reluctant, understandably so, to spend money on such properties. There are many of this type of house in the district. In order to bring the whole matter up to date a detailed housing survey, involving structural housing conditions and information to be used possibly for future improvement areas, would have to be carried out and this would, I submit entail extra temporary staff in the department.

RENT ACT, 1957 -

During the year there were no applications for Certificates of Disrepair, and no applications for the revocation of Certificates of Disrepair by owners of property.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS -

Applications for grants for the improvement of private dwellings are dealt with jointly by the Public Health and Architect's departments, following the pattern set up several years ago. During the year Discretionary Grants were approved for four houses to a total of £2,146. Standard Grants were approved for thirty-two houses to a total of £7,692.

The number of grants increased over those of the previous year. The Governments aim is to concentrate on the stock of existing dwellings and the incentives to the public are being made more and more attractive. One of the basic obstacles to the scheme is that people are often unable to raise the money to carry out the whole improvement scheme.

BUILDING REGULATIONS -

The examination of all plans submitted under the Building Regulations, the preparation of reports to the Planning Committee and subsequent inspection of work in progress, is carried out by the Public Health department, the department itself fulfilling a dual role and acting also as the Surveyor's department. Our activities however, relate only to private development and do not include any development carried out on the Council's behalf. This work being under the control of the Architect's department.

During the year the department dealt with 212 plans, a slight decrease on last years number. There has been no appreciable let up in pressures, both for information and advice because of the complexity of the regulations and I would again stress that you consider the possibility of increasing the staff of the department to deal with part of the work.

CESSPOOL EMPTYING AND COUNCIL'S SEWAGE DISPOSAL PLANTS -

The Council operate four cesspool emptiers, a Ford Thames Trader vehicle with a capacity of 1,000 gallons, a Bedford vehicle with a capacity of 1,000 gallons, a Bedford vehicle with a capacity of 1,500 gallons and a Ford vehicle of 1,000 gallons capacity. The vehicles are each crewed by two men. The cost to occupiers for the emptying service is £1 for each domestic property and £1 per load for commercial premises.

The work carried out by these vehicles consisted of 2,330 jobs, an increase over the previous year. The Council's twenty-seven sewage disposal plants are also de-sludged and during the year 430 loads of sludge were removed from all the plants.

Following on from this is can be said that a happy state of co-operation exists between the Public Health department and the Housing department, whose job it is to maintain the sewage plants. A great deal of help is, and has been received from the Pollution Officer of the Drainage Board, who is constantly checking effluent standards. These standards are usually consistently high but are maintained only by constant supervision and maintenance, the cesspool emptier acts as vital link in this process. The orthodox plants give little trouble, the two extended aeration plants which the Council run have been little trouble. The absence of problems with these plants is directly attributable to splendid work by the maintenance engineer in charge of the plants.

The main disposal outlet for the contents of the cesspool emptiers is still catered for by direct discharge into the Wisbech Borough Council's Sewerage system, thick loads being diverted to the sewage farm belonging to the Wisbech Borough Council and situated at Walpole Marsh. Other disposal is by utilising straw pans and stubble for which owners are paid at the rate of five shillings per load.

The burden of cesspool emptying continues to increase, although weather conditions governing the height of the subsoil water complicates the issue. As with all other districts the general amenity standard is improving and together with new dwellings constantly increase the needs of the district in the disposal of sewage. No substantial progress has been made towards the implementation of the Council's new Sewerage plans. This is a cause for bitter regret.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL -

The Council now operate a weekly kerbside collection of the district together with a twice weekly collection for about six or seven months of the year from the Fridaybridge Agricultural Camp. The service is operated with two fifty cubic yard capacity Eagle Crushload refuse collection vehicles, each crewed by three men. An old Shelvoke and Drewry fore and aft. tipper has been retained as a spare vehicle its use as such is essential for the efficiency of the service. An order for a new Shelvoke and Drewry refuse collection vehicle a 'Revopak' was placed at the end of the year, for delivery it is hoped in early August of 1971.

Bulk refuse is being dealt with as and when requested, it is collected from premises free of charge. Efforts are being maintained to keep open sites free from accumalations.

Refuse disposal facilities are shared with Marshland Rural District Council and the Borough Council of Wisbech. Refuse disposed of in the old Wisbech canal. Soil is excavated and then used to cover over the refuse deposited. Mechanical plant is essential for this kind of operation an International Harvester B.85 with Drott bucket together with a 10 R.B. excavator is provided. Both vehicles are operated by one man. Insect and rodent control measures are carried out over the whole length of the canal.

The volume of refuse is still increasing and its character is changing; weight decreasing, bulk increasing. It is stressed that with this 'throw away' type of society, previously estimated figures for the tipping 'life' of the canal might have to be re-assessed and forward planning put in hand as to future sites in the area. These measures might mean a consortium of districts to include pulverising or incinerating methods prior to tipping.

A salvage system is in operation and all types of materials are utilised. These are sold through a local firm. The revenue for the year was £77 after deduction of the collectors' bonuses.

FOOD -

All food premises in the district were inspected and where necessary occupiers are requested to give attention to contraventions of the Food Hygiene Regulations. Once again particular attention has been paid to the proper use of freezing equipment in premises visited.

There is one permanent poultry processing plant in the district. Poultry and premises are regularly inspected.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES ACT, 1958 -
MEAT INSPECTION REGULATIONS, 1963 -

The district is served by one slaughterhouse owned and operated by Mr. N.V. Gagen. All animals slaughtered at the slaughterhouse at Wolf Lane, Gorefield are inspected and stamped in accordance with the Meat Inspection Regulations but it has again been found impracticable for an inspector to be present at the dressing of all carcases, however inspections are carried out as quickly as possible. There are fixed days for slaughtering and emergency slaughter animals are immediately notified to the department so that inspection can be carried out. The income from inspection fees during the year was £57.

During the year the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Veterinary Officers visited and inspected the slaughterhouse and I would like to record my appreciation of their co-operation in the past year and also the co-operation of the slaughterhouse operator, who is constantly improving his premises and equipment therein.

LICENCES TO SLAUGHTER AND STUN ANIMALS -

Six persons were licenced to slaughter and stun animals. One provisional licence was issued.

CARAVAN SITES AND CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT ACT, 1960 -

There were no site licences issued for the stationing of caravans during the year. The permanent residential site in the area was maintained satisfactorily, and again whole hearted co-operation was received from the site operator.

RODENT CONTROL -

There is no full time operator employed by the Council. Work to Council property and sewage plants is carried out by members of the Housing department staff. The same men also carry out control on a part time basis for the length of the Wisbech canal which is used for refuse disposal. The normal level of infestation remains high and advice and instruction were given to the public. The problem is a national one and should be t eated as one, so that anti-rodent measures can be carried out over all districts uniformly according to a single master plan.

PETROLEUM ACTS -

When underground petroleum tanks are installed in the district the necessary inspections are carried out prior to installation.

ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT, 1963 -

There is one premises used for boarding in the district. Accommodation is provided for twelve animals. Satisfactory conditions were maintained.

SWIMMING POOLS -

There is no large public swimming pool in the area. Most of swimming is done in small swimming pools attached to most schools in the area. Advice is given to head teachers by the department if required and constant checks are made by the department during the season.

CIVIC AMENITIES ACT, 1967 -

The Council have been active in the implementation of the Act. The existing refuse tip at Outwell is utilised for dumping by the public. A system of bulk collection of domestic refuse is in force and advantage is being taken of this. During the year three abandoned cars were removed to a collection depot which has been set up and is shared with Marshland Rural District Council and Wisbech Borough Council.

The practice of dumping rubbish in isolated places in the district continues to increase and once an accumulation remains in one spot for any length of time people assume it a dumping spot and the pile gradually increases, legislation exists for the prevention of such practices, but the practical aspect of control is a very difficult one. Education and propaganda seem the most likely weapons to be used in the battle against indiscriminate dumping.

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION - LAY-BYES -

I have to report that the conveniences at the Guyhirn lay-by continue to work satisfactorily. These have now been in operation since August, 1967. These are chemical type conveniences and so far no real trouble has been experienced. It is obvious that they have filled a long standing need and the public and area generally have benefited. Vandalism is increasing and especially to the sanitary fittings themselves, cupboards have been torn out and the ordinary damage to locks and partitions has continued.

WATER SUPPLY -

This service is provided by the Wisbech and District Water Board. Monthly summaries of bacteriological and chemical examinations are sent through to this department by the Board's Chemist, Mr. Collins, whom I wish to thank for his ready help with problems regarding water supply. Results have been of a very high standard and there was no contamination calling for special action by this department. A short table of examination results are set out below -

	Samples submitted	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Bacteriological	540	540	Nil
Chemical	68	68	Nil

The district as a whole is well supplied and there are very few houses now which do not have a mains water supply available.

Fluoride Content -

A sample of mixed Marham and Beecham Well water taken at the Water Board's Offices on 10th November 1970, showed no fluoride content. A sample of Marham water at Marham pumping station (mixed treated water) fluoride content 0.02 p.p.m. (as fluorine).

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963 -

At the end of the year 53 premises, employing 104 persons were registered, as detailed below -

REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

Class of Premises	Premises Registered During year	Total Premises Registered end of year	Registered Premises Inspected
Offices	1	19	12
Retail Shops	Nil	25	16
Wholesale shops Warehouses	Nil	4	2
Catering establishments open to public	Nil	3	3
Fuel Storage Depots	Nil	2	1
Totals	1	53	34

ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE -

Class of Workplace	Number of Persons Employed
Offices	37
Retail Shops	31
Wholesale departments, warehouses	4
Catering establishments open to public	22
Fuel storage depots	10
TOTAL	104
TOTAL MALES	45
TOTAL FEMALES	59

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned in whole or in par

1970

1.1.70 to 31.12.70	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Ho
Number Killed:	263	-	-	191	735	
Number Inspected:	263	-	-	191	735	
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci:						
Whole carcases condemned	1	-	-	-	2	
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	33	-	-	6	145	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with diseases other than tuber culosis and cysticerci:	12.9	-	-	3.1	20	
Tuberculosis only:						
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-	
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	2	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	0.3	
Cysticercoses:						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-	
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	

FACTORIES ACT, 1947 and 1948.

Part 1 of the Act.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purpose of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Public Health Inspectors).

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Inspections. (4)	Number of Written Notices (5)	Occ. Prs.td. (6)	M/c line No. (7)
(1) Factories in which Sects.1,2, 3,4 &6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities:	1	18	31	-	-	1
(11) Factories not included in (1) in which Sect.7 is enforced by the Local Authority:	2	23	35	-	-	2
(111) Other premises in which Sect.7 is enforced by the Local Authority (Excluding Out-workers Premises):	3	-	-	-	-	3
TOTAL	-	41	66	-	-	-

2. No defects were discovered during the year.